



## UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

A church for people  
with enquiring minds

### February 2010

#### Sunday Services

**Feb. 7 - Annual General Meeting**

\*\*Please join us for Soup du Jour following meeting\*\*

**Feb. 14 - Love in Words and Song**

– Carl Beckett

A look at the scientific, psychological and philosophical aspects of romantic love with some songs intermingled.

**Feb. 21 - Ways of Seeing: How Movies Influence Our Opinions**

– Kevin Jacobi

**Feb. 28 – Rotary Club – John Teibert  
S.L. John Mayer**

#### Annual General Meeting Voting Proxy

Our congregation's Annual General Meeting will be held on February 7 as the Sunday service. If you cannot attend but would like to name a proxy to vote on any issues that arise, please give the proxy a letter saying that you designate that person as your proxy and put your signature at the bottom. This letter should be given to the Secretary before the meeting begins.

#### Food for Thought . . .

I was asked to summarize my sermon on Jan. 3, 2010, so that those who were not there could think about the matter, and vote in an informed and reflective way at the Annual General Meeting and the budget drafting meeting preceding it.

My sermon was inspired by a very thought-provoking article in the Fall 2009 issue of the UU World magazine, entitled "Reach Out to Become a 'Public' Church" by Michael Durall. (p.14f.) In it he argues that our fourth principle, "A free and responsible search for truth and meaning" is a significant liability rather than a positive element as regards growth and recruitment of new members. He claims that the questions that arise in this domain, as to whether or not there is a God, or an afterlife are issues for the private sphere, and do not really matter much socially as to how we end up answering them. People who have such concerns usually drop out of churches, and do not look to a church for the usual "churchy" answers to such questions. Sermons designed to examine answers may be of interest to members, but are not "significant issues of our times". The author is impressed by the outreach of churches to address issues of injustice, oppression, poverty, hunger, housing, and other "real" issues of our world. He cites that 'public' oriented churches have an average of 16% of their budget oriented toward an outreach to people less fortunate than ourselves, beyond our four walls,

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**2009/2010**

PRESIDENT: Michael Petrocci  
VICE PRESIDENT:

Jon Stahl

PAST PRESIDENT:

Fred Bolton

LAY CHAPLAINS:

Ed Gilbert

Valerie Jaeger

Julianne Momirov

SECRETARY:

Anita Miecznikowski

TREASURER:

Carl Beckett

MEMBER AT LARGE:

Ed Gilbert

CHOIR/MUSIC:

Penny Blake

COMMUNICATIONS:

Bruce Millar

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS:

under review

LAY CHAPLAINCY:

Fred Bolton

MEMBERSHIP:

Jim Glassford

NEWSLETTER:

Sofia Vuorinen

PASTORAL CARE:

Jenny Leach, John Berry

PHONE: Beverly Russell

PROGRAM:

Julianne Momirov

PROPERTY:

Peter Skelton

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Tba

CONTACT FOR ADULT RE:

Joan Rothman &

Marie Belliveau

RENTAL: John Northover

SEXUAL & GENDER

DIVERSITY:

Joan Wiley

SOCIAL: Hilde Wheeler

SOCIAL JUSTICE:

Marie Belliveau

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Rhonda Armstrong

TRUSTEES:

Andrea Gravelle, Don Herne

James Wilson

WEBSITE:

Roy Blake, Bruce Millar

and suggests that we check whether we are a 'privately' focussed or publically 'focussed' organization by checking what portion of our budget is designated for "outreach". Our Fellowship is, by this criterion, strictly "private", and therefore socially irrelevant. To attract people, we must not only talk the talk of justice and compassion, but, as a community, walk the walk. Of course, individuals may be very beneficially active as individuals, but that does not indicate that the Fellowship community is active. I was impressed by his argument, and feel that we should have more of a social outreach than we now have, and that if we succeed in being seen as doing some good - in the community, or in the world - that would serve the chosen issue(s) but also attract those who share the importance of these goals. I suggested that as we have a limited amount of resources, we should select our outreach goals thoughtfully, and publicize the event as best we can. But in any case, our next budget cannot be merely a continuation of the existing one, in which no resources are allocated to outside objectives, and if decide responsibly to grow into a 'public' church, we must reach into our pockets to do so. I suggested that if we wish to, we could increase our pledges by 16%, so as to make our future secure doing everything we have done so far, and allocate about \$5,000.00 to "outreach" and support causes that need support. The Board, and ultimately the congregation needs to have its input into identifying what objective(s) we select. But at the AGM you will have an opportunity to discuss and support or reject the decision to become a 'public' church.

I have abbreviated the matter as best I can; but come out to the AGM, or if you cannot, at least let Carl Beckett know whether you are willing to increase your pledge so as to enable us to graduate from being a congregation focussed on private issues to being one discernible as supporting important public issues.

There was a considerable discussion after the service, which I interpreted as generally supportive of my proposal.

– John Mayer

## Climate Change

Phil Curtis gave us an address called "**Climate Change: Real Numbers and Great Changes. What Should We Do?**" I asked Phil to write us a summary that the average lay person could read. He did so and it is available through our website (go to services, then down the bottom to previous services, then click on the link to the presentations) or more quickly by going to Sermons.

– Sofia



# Congregation News

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## Film Night

Mark your calendars.....film night February 19<sup>th</sup>. The film will be "Fierce Light".

## BOOK CLUB ALERT

The book club meets every OTHER month. The next one is scheduled for March, date to be advised.

The next book to be discussed at the Book Club meeting in March is:

**The Bishop's Man**  
by Linden MacIntyre  
– Jenny Leach

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## Choir Notes

*On February 14 the choir will be proud to present:*

**'Love in Words and Song'**  
featuring our very own Carl Beckett

*As you will see, we have a lot of fun singing & coming up with different music for the congregation. If you want to join us, just let me know.*

– Penny Blake



## From the Board . . . Minutes from Board Meeting, November 19, 2009:

### 1. Ad Hoc CUC Relations Committee:

- Identify areas of concern.
- Board to make report to congregation and CUC
- Board to do final report
- Board members will vote on a statement, with a majority/minority report, if necessary

- Doreen will send board members the verbatim responses as well as the summary, as well as sending those to the CUC

### 2. Paperless Sunday:

- saved about \$30
- we were on 350.org map
- M/S/C Bruce/Carl to eliminate the order of service once a month, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – December 13
- Carl suggested getting an overhead projector
- Bruce suggested asking Roy Blake to coordinate.

### 3. Canvass Update:

- Carl reported 32 replies, with \$23,650 pledged

### 4. Nominating Committee:

- Michael, Doreen and Joan will meet on November 24

### 5. Piano:

- Yamaha upright digital is \$3995 + tax
- Yamaha grand is \$5995 + tax
- Theresa and Penny should go to Hamilton to try them

### 6. Laptop:

- Bruce did a presentation showing a cost of \$575
- Secure storage is needed
- Internet is not needed
- Roy will search for bargains
- M/S/C Carl/Bruce to buy a laptop and printer/scanner/fax combination

for no more than \$600 + tax

## New Business:

### A. Babysitting:

There was a discussion of babysitting services provided.

### B. Snow Removal

- Peter has arranged snow removal for \$700 for the season with the same contractor as in 2006, 2007

## Minutes from Board Meeting, December 17, 2009:

### 1. Agenda M/S/C Ed/Fred

Minutes M/S/C Bruce/Fred with a couple of revisions

**Paperless Sunday:** Mixed response. We will print 10 copies for those who want them, copying them on our new copier. The white board will be used for hymn numbers, etc. The service leader is responsible for doing that.

### 2. Treasurer's Report:

Carl reported revenue of \$4831 over expenses. M/S/C Carl/Fred

**Babysitting:** There was discussion of babysitting services and acknowledgement of some concerns.

**Canvass Update:** Pledges totaling \$28,830 are in from approx. 40 respondents. The dinner cost \$630 and took in \$680. Expenses were wine and entertainment. Nominations are nearly complete. A list was presented.

**Piano:** No progress has been made on looking at or playing pianos; postponed to January.

**Laptop/Copier:** has been installed and Roy has been thanked for his work.

**Concert:** according to Doreen, possibly early April

### 3. New Business:

**Social Action** report was sent by Marie

**AGM report:** reports ready by

January 31. Carl can have the budget ready by then, to go on the website for congregational consideration

**Lay Chaplain issues:** The East Lay Chaplaincy Committee is responsible. Michael sent a letter to the CUC re: rites of passage but has had no response yet.

*As space is limited these minutes are presented in abbreviated form. Anyone wishing more detailed information feel free to contact the Secretary.*

## Resolution for Social Action Fund Increase 2010

At a service early this January, John Mayer talked about UCN meeting its obligations to Social Action and also about increasing our budget to meet the nation average amount of 16% of a church/congregation's operating budget.

This is something that I have been talking about for some time now and was glad to hear this coming from one of the leaders of this congregation. This congregation cannot just be a meeting place we come to once a week. Yes, many of our members are very involved with Social Action causes outside of this place but what do we as a congregation do together for Social Action causes/issues, not much.

I whole-heartedly support John Mayer's plea for our congregation to raise the Social Action budget and for all who are able to also raise our contributions to afford this

raise. I have written the resolution below and will be reading it at the Annual General Meeting in February. I am putting this in the newsletter to allow you to be familiar with this before the AGM. Please see below.

– Marie Belliveau

As Members of the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara we strive to be responsible citizens of the Niagara Community and support Social Action causes.

We understand that Social Action is a public and visual way to encourage members of the Niagara community to become familiar with our congregation and perhaps become members.

Whereas the national Canadian average for a Church or Congregation to donate in one year is 16% of its operating budget; and

Whereas the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara has never met the 16% national average (for UCN that equals \$5000) and borders just under 6% or \$2000 of our operating budget;

Be it resolved that the Members of the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara move towards the National average of 16% by increasing the budget for Social Action by 5% for two consecutive years; and

Be it also resolved that the Membership of the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara increase their yearly pledges by 5% for two consecutive years to realize these increases, while ensuring that no other congregational program should face a year-over-year funding shortfall.

## So Much for "Hopenhagen"

Above the email I received from Anne Feeney was a pictorial depiction of a wine glass filled with a Disneyland city atop a coca-cola bottle with a label beside it "A Bottle of Hope." Above this is the label HOPENHAGEN. Read on to see why a bottle like the Coca-Cola bottle holds up the wine glass.

Anne Feeney emailed me about her Swedish husband, Julie and her own experiences in Copenhagen during their attendance at the international meeting on global warning. She starts by saying that it looked pretty obvious from the time we arrived at the airport that the official Climate Summit was going to be a corporate affair. Inside the Bella Centre, site of the official Climate Summit, the poorest nations were ostracized as the G20 met with their corporate sponsors. The G20 leaders seemed to be determined to gather corporate goodies and they reported that the environment is in the capable hands of Coca-Cola, Siemens, and Monsanto! There were hundreds of thousands of activists trying to keep the delegates honest. However, Denmark really went berserk in anticipation of the summit. There were laws that were passed that can be called fascist in nature. They were allowing for mass arrests without charge and the right to detain people without charge for up to 40 days.

They marched in the 100,000 strong permitted march through downtown Copenhagen. The police presence was overwhelming. About 3/4 of a mile into the march, as they rounded a bend, a couple hundred black-clad youngsters ran through their procession and out the other side.

Within moments, they were surrounded by hundreds of police and dozens of paddy wagons and police dogs. About 1,000 were completely isolated from the march by riot police. The march behind them was diverted around them. Only a few hundred people stayed on the outer perimeter, occasionally chanting "let them go!" For a while it appeared that the cops were attempting to cherry-pick their ranks and arrest only those they felt were possibly part of the anarchist black bloc that had completely escaped well before the police stopped them.

As the hours dragged on, the day turned to night, and the temperature plummeted. It became increasingly clear that the cops were going to arrest them all - Belgians, French, Norwegians, Swedes, Germans and Danes- Hare Krishnas, school kids, elderly trade union activists, some puppetistas with big papier mache cows that occasionally charged the police chanting "Moouooooo!"

So the cops arrested everyone, about 700 people. As they arrested Anne's husband, one of their Danish hosts from the Tvind progressive education movement engaged the cops in a dialogue. Anne did not follow the Danish argument but was told later that the host told the cops that Anne was a famous folksinger from the U.S. and her arrest would cause terrible embarrassment to the Danish police. To her astonishment, the cops escorted them and the wagon on which she was to perform out of the area.

Those arrested were all handcuffed behind their backs and made to sit on the freezing street, sitting up with their legs apart to accommodate the person arrested after them. As the hours went by, many of those

arrested ended up peeing their pants. Julie was at the back of one of those rows, with many people leaning back against him. He had no back support except for his handcuffed hands. When the cops finally came to haul him off to the pokey and instructed him to get up, but he couldn't. The cop helped him to his feet, sized him up and took pity on him. He undid Julie's handcuffs and escorted him to the perimeter, and even loaned him a cell phone so that he could let us know that he hadn't been taken to the jail.

Julie was interviewed by Danish mainstream television, and also by some Swedish newspapers to attest to the lawlessness of the Danish police. Denmark's growing right wing is developing their own FOX-like news fraudcasting. Anne heard this term was being used most appropriately to describe such reporting. I think it will become part of my vocabulary too.

Anne has included some excerpts from a couple of these Danish right wing sites with the links to the original Danish. Ekstra Badet, is the Danish newspaper that reported sympathetically on the unprovoked police roundup of 1,000 demonstrators. They quote that a poor 66-year old painter named Haakon "Julie" Leonnartsod him as the man of Anne Feeney. "Feeney is a member of the relatively unknown Industrial Workers of the World, a legend in Communist circles. She is a member of one of the oldest terrorist organizations in the world - Industrial Workers of the World." One does not need to add any comments about such absurd reporting.

Anne reports that the last of their wonderful holiday company arrived safely in the U.S. - after a 3 hour delay in Copenhagen that included a complimentary full body frisking, residue of the crotch bomber's antics.

She was glad to be home in the safety of her country, the U.S.

I have chosen to share with you some of these unreported activities since our media has not reported any of such horrendous violations of people during this peaceful protest. I have talked to many other people in Canada who have undergone similar types of treatment during their nonviolent protests right here in Canada. I think many of us will be surprised to learn that Denmark has now joined the ranks of such. Thank you, Anne, for sharing with us these occurrences so that many more people will become aware of this type of violation of people's rights and how pervasive it has become as we further and further protest.

You can get Anne Feeney's latest CD at :

<http://cdbaby.com/cd/annefeeney7>

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## Dr. Robert Hoover

Apr. 28, 1920 – Jan. 22, 2010

A Grace said by Bob Hoover at the Torch Club Dinner meeting of March 11, 2008

Dear Manitou and Friend,

We are thankful that your Golden Rule is more than a statement of intellectual belief, formulated by gifted persons of advanced learning or prophetic insight. We are grateful that this golden ethic is written on the hearts and minds of all persons and peoples, be they wise or simple.

Thank you that the human race is hard-wired to realize when people are being merely used for the selfish purposes of others; and for the fact

that it is written into our moral DNA to feel guilty when we use others for partial purposes of our own - even when we feel our purposes are for the other guy's best good.

We are especially grateful for the religious communities which have their own perspectives on the Great Ethic: 15 million Jews, 400 million Buddhists, a billion Hindus, a billion and a half Muslims, 2 billion Christians and all those persons and

peoples of good will, be they atheists, agnostics, secular humanists, non-theists, who strive, each in their own way, to practice the Perennial Universal Ethic of Gold. And so, we are thankful for those who resist the urge to micro-manage others, and who will not stand by watching as others are being merely used.

And so, in this our thanks for the table here spread before us, we ask that in your grace, you help us demonstrate our allegiance to the perennial universal rule of Gold by action and performance. To this end, liberate us

from the gilded rule of proclamation without performance, so that poverty and starvation amid gluttony and over-indulgence may be ended; and that this bountiful planet shall have a renewal of sustainability, and its life shall not perish from the face of the universe.

Shalom!

*(A memorial service for Dr. Robert Hoover will be held in about 3 weeks. Details of the service will be published in the newspaper.)*

## UCN activities: January to March 2010

<b>Monday</b>	10 – 12 (noon)	Jan 04 – Mar 29	Yoga Unlimited.
	6 – 8 pm	Jan 04 – Mar 29	Yoga Unlimited.
<b>Tuesday</b>	6 – 9 pm	Jan 05 – Mar 30	Niagara Dance Co.
<b>Wednesday</b>	6:45 – 8:30 pm	Jan 06 – Mar 31	Yoga Unlimited
<b>Thursday</b>	4:30 – 6:15 pm	Jan 07 – Mar 25	Yoga Unlimited.
	6:30 – 9:30 pm	Jan 14 – Mar 25	St John Ambulance.
	7:30 – 9:30 pm	Jan 14 and March 04.	UCN Board meeting
<b>Friday</b>	6 – 9 pm	Jan 08, Feb 05, Mar 05	Niagara Action for Animals.
	7 – 9:30 pm	Jan 29, Feb 19, Mar 19	UCN Film Night
<b>Saturday</b>	Usually afternoon.	Weekly church cleaning, chair placement for Sunday	
<b>Sunday</b>	10:45 – 12:30	Weekly service.	
	6 – 8 pm	Weekly UCN Buddhist gathering (Hilde 685-4936)	

Please communicate any errors, changes and new requests for reservations to John Northover at 905-934-7487 [jgnorth@vaxxine.com](mailto:jgnorth@vaxxine.com) who will then include them on the calendar in the church and forward them to Roy Blake for inclusion on the website calendar under Facilities & Rentals. Thank you.

### UNICAMP Day is February 7, 2010.

Please take a minute on February 7<sup>th</sup>, during your Joys and Concerns time to mention Unicamp and briefly share your experience. Unicamp's 2010 brochure is available at your Welcome Table.



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